

Vauxhall Agila 1.2 Club

Road Test - by Ian Lamming



Sherwoods

THERE once was an ugly duckling with metal all stubby and grey – but, believe it or not, there were many happy customers who absolutely swore by the old Agila.

Granted the majority were the country's elders with the tall, square, tin box of a car going down a storm with the Motability crowd – an ever-growing sector for dealers that should not be ignored.

But everyone is becoming more style conscious nowadays and while practicality has to be an issue, image is right up there on the check list.

New Agila simply had to look appealing – and guess what it does. Cue the music while the new swan of the small car sector glides into view. The diminutive Vauxhall instantly grabs attention. It is so obviously a Vauxhall with the characteristic v-shaped grille. Bystanders tend to do a double take thinking it's a Corsa but then realising it can't be as it is too tall.

On second viewing you can really start to appreciate the detailing. The overall shape is upright which will appeal to those looking for that all important feeling of spaciousness.

But the proportions are clever. Track is nice and wide and the wheels are at far-flung corners. It is tall but rises in stages with not too much metal above the waistline. The overall effect is that it doesn't look top heavy and ready to topple, like it would be a nightmare in a cross wind, which is a good result.

The next plus is the face of the Agila which is bold and prominent. Big lights stand sentinel either side of a deep grille and the curvaceous front end is finished off with stylish spotlights set into alloy-look roundels.



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1.2 Club



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VAUXHALL

Side windows are enormous but meld nicely into a shapely doors and wings.

Then the hatchback brings up the rear with one of the neatest backsides on the road.

Funky exterior styling carries on inside and the new interior leaves the ugly predecessor in the shade. The large, centrally-placed white-faced speedo can't fail to appeal as does the dash-mounted rev counter pod. The facia slopes towards the driver and ends in a handily placed gear lever. It's all very attractive and logical and works a treat.



It may be poles apart from the old Agila but practicality remains. High-set seats are easy to get in and out of and the doors open widely. There's bags of space and the feeling of airiness is unparalleled.



The duplex boot is useful too. It is not a bad size anyway then underneath the floor is about the same again with various compartments to hide away the goodies. If you need even more space then the rear seats tuck neatly away to give you access to more than 1,000 litres.

Agila looks like a town car and there is no doubting that it's absolutely superb in a city setting. It is just so easy to drive, manoeuvre, park. You sit high and can see everything around you.



Steering is ultra light and quick and the 1.2 litre engine is peppy and willing. It whizzes through the urban fray and is more than capable of holding it own on traffic-choked roads.

But it's on the open road that it surprises. It's not going to

out-drag many cars on the slip road of the motorway. But once it has gathered a full head of steam it is capable of supreme cruising.

And just watch the fuel gauge – actually don't you may fall asleep waiting for it to move. The combined figure is a wallet-saving 51.4 miles per gallon.

So the new Agila has finally grown into its awkward features. It's a modern and trendy small car that nobody will demand gets out of town.

Vital Statistics

Model: Vauxhall Agila Club 1.2

Engine: 1.2 litre four cylinder

Drivetrain: five speed manual

Power: 86PS

Top speed: 109mph

0-60mph: 12.3secs

Insurance group: 3E

Miles per gallon combined: 51.4

CO2 (g/km): 131

Price: from £9,395.00